

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

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FM AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6117

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB AIFLD XL BB

SUBJ: LA REVIEW OF AIFLD REGIONAL PROJECT

REF: STATE 151613

FOLLOWING GENERAL ANSWERS ARE PROVIDED TO QUESTIONS REFTEL.
ABSENCE OF EMBASSY LABOR OFFICER (SINCE FEBRUARY ON TDY IN
VIET NAM) AND AIFLD REP (SILVA RESIGNED IN MAY AND NO RE-
PLACEMENT NAMED YET) DOES NOT PERMIT MORE DETAILED RESPONSE.

A. EMBASSY CONSIDERS AIFLD PROGRAM IMPORTANT TO FREE LABOR
DEVELOPMENT IN BARBADOS AND ASSOCIATED STATES BECAUSE IT PRO-
VIDES ORIENTATION FOR CCL AND FOR TRADE UNIONS IN THIS AREA
TOWARD U.S. AND ALONG DEMOCRATIC LINES. AIFLD PROGRAM ALSO
PROVIDES EMBASSY WITH CONTACT WITH THESE UNIONS AND WITH
USEFUL INFORMATION ON DEVELOPMENTS IN LABOR FIELD. GOB
WELCOMES AIFLD BECAUSE OF BWU TIES TO AND SUPPORT FOR GOVERN-
ING DLP. IN ASSOCIATED STATES, EXCEPT FOR GOVERNMENTS OF
ANTIGUA AND ST. KITTS, WHICH ARE CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH CCL-
AFFILIATED UNIONS AND WHICH THEREFORE PRESUMABLY WELCOME
AIFLD PROGRAM, OTHER GOVERNMENTS' ATTITUDES ARE PROBABLY
AMBIVALENT DEPENDING ON WHETHER THEY SEE LOCAL UNIONS (AND
AIFLD'S TIES) AS HELPFUL OR HARMFUL TO THEIR INTERESTS.
LOCAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AFFILIATED WITH CCL AND RECEIVING
ASSISTANCE FROM AIFLD WELCOME AIFLD SUPPORT SINCE IN MANY
CASES IT IS ONE OF FEW SOURCES OF TRAINING AND FUNDS. LABOR

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UNIONS NOT AFFILIATED WITH CCL EITHER HAVE OTHER OUTSIDE TIES
(SUCH AS WITH CLAT) OR ARE FOR THE MOST PART INSIGNIFICANT.

B. LOCAL LABOR GROUPS (EXCEPT FOR BARBADOS WORKERS' UNION IN BARBADOS) ARE FOR MOST PART SO LIMITED IN FUNDS AVAILABLE THAT IT IS PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR THEM TO INSTITUTIONALIZE ACTIVITIES IN EDUCATION AND SOCIAL PROJECTS. BWU, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS SUFFICIENT FUNDS OF ITS OWN FROM DUES AND FROM SOME GOVERNMENT SUPPORT THAT IT IS TAKING POSITIVE STEPS TO INSTITUTIONALIZE SUCH PROJECTS, NOT ONLY IN EDUCATION FIELD THROUGH TRAINING COURSES LIKE ANNUAL SUMMER SCHOOL BUT PARTICULARLY IN CONCRETE STEPS TO MOVE AHEAD WITH ITS OWN LABOR COLLEGE, FOUNDATION STONE OF WHICH WAS LAID AUGUST 23 BY MINISTER OF EDUCATION.

C. PROSPECTS FOR INSTITUTIONALIZING IMPORTANT ACTIVITIES OVER NEXT FEW YEARS ARE POOR IN ASSOCIATED STATES BUT GOOD IN BARBADOS, ESPECIALLY WITH CONSTRUCTION BEGINNING SOON OF LABOR COLLEGE. EMBASSY HAS NO SUGGESTIONS TO OFFER ON ACCELERATING THIS PROCESS OR IN BRINGING ABOUT IMPROVED FINANCIAL VIABILITY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY OTHER THAN TO CONTINUE AIFLD EDUCATION PROGRAM HERE.

D. BWU HAS SENT TWO MEMBERS TO GEORGETOWN ECONOMICS COURSE: LAWRENCE NURSE WHO IS NOW SENIOR ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY FOR RESEARCH, AND STANLEY NICHOLS, BWU ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT. BOTH ARE IN KEY POSITIONS. BWU ALSO SENDS AVERAGE OF 4-5 MEMBERS TO FRONT ROYAL COURSES ANNUALLY. IN ABSENCE OF AIFLD REP, STATISTICS ON PERSONS ATTENDING THESE COURSES FROM OTHER ISLANDS ARE NOT AVAILABLE. FOLLOW UP SYSTEM IS INADEQUATE WITHOUT AIFLD REP HERE.

E. AIFLD PROGRAMS ARE REACHING PRIORITY TARGET GROUPS SINCE THOSE UNIONS ASSISTED ARE MOST IMPORTANT UNIONS IN ALL THE ISLANDS. BECAUSE ISLANDS AND LOCAL LABOR FORCES ARE SO SMALL, THESE UNIONS REPRESENT GOOD MIX OF LOCAL LABOR ELEMENTS, INCLUDING SOME RURAL BUT MOSTLY URBAN MEMBERS.

F. SIMILAR PROGRAM OBJECTIVES FOR FY 74-75 FUNDING PERIOD ARE EXPECTED.

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G. UNDER OBJECTIVE I (STRENGTHEN CCL AFFILIATES) PROSPECTS OF IMPLEMENTING EDUCATION COURSES AND INCREASING UNIONS' DUES-PAYING MEMBERSHIP ARE GOOD BUT PROSPECTS FOR DEVELOPING SOCIAL SERVICE PROJECTS ARE NOT SO GOOD. UNDER OBJECTIVE II (DEVELOPMENT OF CCL TRADE UNION SERVICES) IMPLEMENTATION IS BEING DELAYED BY DECISION TO MOVE CCL REGIONAL SECRETARIAT FROM PORT OF SPAIN TO BRIDGETOWN AND TO APPOINT NEW SECRETARY IN PLACE OF GASTON BENJAMIN. THESE QUESTIONS WERE TREATED AT CCL TRIENIAL CONGRESS IN CURACAO LAST MAY AND AT CCL GENERAL COUNCIL MEETING IN BRIDGETOWN IN JULY. BURNS

BONADIE OF ST. VINCENT HAS BEEN APPOINTED SECRETARY-TREASURER BUT THE CCL REGIONAL OFFICE WILL NOT BE EFFECTIVELY MOVED FROM PORT OF SPAIN TO BRIDGETOWN UNTIL SEPTEMBER. ATTAINMENT OF OBJECTIVES SHOULD STILL BE POSSIBLE. UNDER OBJECTIVE III (ORIT-ITS-CCL COORDINATION) CCL PARTICIPATION IN AT LEAST TWO ITS COURSES SHOULD BE POSSIBLE; WHETHER TWO CCL AFFILIATES WILL JOIN ITS ORGANIZATIONS REMAINS TO BE SEEN.

H. AIFLD PROGRAM FITS IN NICELY TO MISSION AND HOST COUNTRY GOALS OF PROMOTING DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRATIC LABOR MOVEMENT, WHICH IMPLEMENTS ITS OBJECTIVES IN RESPONSIBLE WAY SUCH AS MATURE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.

I. THERE ARE NO LOCAL LABOR ENTITIES WITH LOCAL RESOURCES ABLE TO SERVE AS ALTERNATES IN CARRYING OUT ACTIVITIES CURRENTLY HANDLED BY AIFLD.

J. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS CONTINUATION OF PRESENT AIFLD PROGRAM AT CURRENT MODEST LEVEL.
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